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Foreign Relations, 1969-1976, Volume E-7, South Asia, 1969-1972

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No. SS/17/5/69
March 27, 1969

Dear Mr. Secretary,
General A. M. Yahya Khan, Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan, has asked me to convey the following personal message to President Richard M. Nixon:

BEGINS

" Excellency

On March 24th President Mohammad Ayub Khan addressed to me a letter, explaining that since the civil administration and constitutional authority in Pakistan had become ineffective, he had no option but to step aside and let the defence forces of Pakistan, as only remaining effective and legal instrument, to take over full control of the country's affairs. On March 25th he announced his decision to relinquish office of the President of Pakistan and called upon me, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army, to fulfill my constitutional responsibilities to defend the country not only against external aggression but also to save it from internal disorder and chaos.

2. Consequently, I have placed the country under Martial Law and assumed all powers as the Chief Martial Law Administrator.

3. It will be my earnest endeavour to restore as soon as possible normal conditions in the country as a preliminary to early restoration of democratic rule and a civilian Government elected on the basis of adult franchise.

4. In this difficult hour Pakistan needs goodwill, understanding and support of all its friends. I am confident that existing friendly relations between Pakistan and your great country, will not only be maintained but would continue to grow. On my part I can assure you that there will be no change in Pakistan's policy which seeks friendship with all countries.

5. I take this opportunity to extend to you my warmest regards and best wishes. Please accept Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

General A.M. Yahya Khan "
ENDS

May I request you to be kind enough to transmit
the above to the President.

With my warm personal regards,
Yours sincerely,
(A. Hilaly)

The Honourable William P. Rogers, The Secretary of State,
The Department of State,
Washington, D.C.

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